

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-05 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 IO-10 AID-05 OMB-01 ACDA-05 NIC-01 /087 W

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R 041821Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4819

INFO AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

USMISSION USUN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 29085

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: X-GDS-4

TAGS: CB, UN, VS

SUBJECT: FRENCH VIEWS ON LE DUC THO'S VISIT AND THE UN
VOTE ON CAMBODIA

REF: PARIS 27911

SUMMARY: ACCORDING TO QUAI OFFICIAL HENRI BOLLE, LE DUC
THO DID NOT MEET WITH ANY FRENCH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS
DURING HIS NOVEMBER 25 - DECEMBER 3 STAY IN PARIS.

ALTHOUGH UNCLEAR ABOUT THE REAL PURPOSE OF HIS TRIP,
BOLLE BELIEVED THO'S MEETING WITH THIRD FORCE OFFICIALS
WAS PERHAPS THE MOST NOTEWORTHY ASPECT OF THE VISIT.
AID NEGOTIATIONS ON A BASIS OF EQUALITY WERE PROCEEDING
AS EXPECTED WITH HANOI AND SAIGON. BOLLE THOUGHT THE
RECENT UN VOTE ON CAMBODIA DID NOT SIGNIFICANTLY
IMPROVE THE PROSPECTS FOR NEGOTIATIONS. END SUMMARY

1. IN CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF ON 3 DECEMBER, QUAI
DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR ASIA (BOLLE) MADE THE FOLLOWING
COMMENTS:

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2. LE DUC THO HAD NOT MET WITH ANY MEMBERS OF THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT, AND THERE HAD BEEN NO "BILATERAL CONTACTS". THO HAD, HOWEVER, SENT WRITTEN GREETINGS VIA THE NORTH VIETNAMESE AMBASSADOR TO THE FRENCH PRESIDENT, PRIME MINISTER AND FOREIGN MINISTER.

3. THE REAL PURPOSE OF THE TRIP WAS UNCLEAR. ON THE SURFACE, THO WAS ONLY RETURNING GEORGE MARCHAIS' NOVEMBER, 1973 VISIT TO HANOI. THO'S PUBLIC STATEMENTS IN PARIS WERE UNREMARKABLE REITERATIONS OF STANDARD NORTH VIETNAMESE PROPAGANDA.

4. A DECEMBER 1 MEETING BETWEEN THO AND "THIRD FORCE" FIGURES WAS PERHAPS THE MOST NOTEWORTHY ASPECT OF HIS STAY. THO PLEDGED THAT HANOI WOULD SUPPORT THEIR "STRUGGLE TO IMPLEMENT THE PARIS ACCORDS." WHILE RE-ITERATING THE NEED FOR REUNIFICATION, HE SAID IT WOULD NOT COME "IN MY GENERATION".

5. ALTHOUGH THE REMARKS TO THE THIRD FORCE GROUP WERE STANDARD RHETORIC, THO EMPHASIZED MORE THAN USUAL THAT REUNIFICATION WOULD NOT BE IMMEDIATE. FURTHER, ALTHOUGH PRG LUMINARIES PHAM VAN BA AND DINH BA THI WERE PRESENT, THO DID NOT BOTHER TO DEFER TO THEM: HE "TALKED OVER THE HEAD OF THE PRG".

6. VIETNAMESE OF "MANY TENDENCIES" WERE AT THE MEETING, INCLUDING FORMER SOUTH VIETNAMESE DEFENSE MINISTER NGUYEN HUU CHAU. HOWEVER SOME OF THE MORE PROMINENT LEFTIST VIETNAMESE, SUCH AS THICH THIEN CHAU, HEAD OF THE OVERSEAS VIETNAMESE BUDDHIST ASSOCIATION, AND PHAM VAN HUYEN, FATHER OF NGO BA THANH, DID NOT ATTEND.

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(COMMENT: THEIR ABSENCE IS IN KEEPING WITH THE CURRENT EFFORT OF THE DRV/PRG IN PARIS TO CULTIVATE THIRD FORCE FIGURES NOT PROMINENTLY IDENTIFIED AS PRO-COMMUNIST.)

7. THE THIRD FORCE MEETING WAS PROBABLY NOT PLANNED IN ADVANCE, BUT IMPROVISED LARGELY AT THE INSTIGATION OF FORMER SOUTH VIETNAMESE ARMY COLONEL TRAN DINH LAN WHO WAS ALSO PRESENT. (COMMENT: VIETNAMESE OF ALL POLITICAL PERSUASIONS BELIEVE THAT LAN IS A FRENCH AGENT. MORE-OVER, BOLLE'S EMPHASIS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF THE MEETING SUGGESTS THAT THE FRENCH MAY HAVE AT LEAST INDIRECTLY HELPED TO ORGANIZE IT.)

8. THO'S VISIT HAD NO CONNECTION WITH THE NORTH VIETNAMESE DELEGATION, HEADED BY HOANG TRONG DAI, WHICH ON NOVEMBER 29 SIGNED AN AID PROTOCOL IN PARIS FOR 130,000,000 FRANCS. THIS ENTIRE SUM WOULD BE PROJECT RATHER THAN FINANCIAL AID. ALTHOUGH THE PROJECTS HAD NOT BEEN DEFINED, IT WAS PROBABLE THAT THEY WOULD BE VERY SIMILAR TO THOSE FINANCED IN 1973 - LIGHT INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITIES, SUCH AS FISH PROCESSING AND BICYCLE PLANTS.
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9. FRANCE CONTINUED TO ADHERE TO A POLICY OF AID PARITY, AND THE NEGOTIATIONS SOON TO BEGIN IN SAIGON "WILL RESULT IN AID EQUAL TO THAT TO NORTH VIETNAM." UNLIKE THE NORTH VIETNAMESE, HOWEVER, THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE WERE MORE INTERESTED IN FINANCIAL RATHER THAN PROJECT AID. THUS, 50 OF THE AID TO SOUTH VIETNAM WOULD BE AS TIED LOANS AND GRANTS TO EASE SOUTH VIETNAMESE BALANCE OF PAYMENTS PROBLEMS AND 50 AS PROJECTS.

10. ON THE SUBJECT OF CAMBODIA, THE UNITED NATIONS VOTE FAVORING PHNOM PENH AT LEAST PREVENTED NEW DIFFICULTIES FOR THE GKR. NEVERTHELESS, THE VOTE DID NOT MATERIALLY IMPROVE THE PROSPECTS FOR NEGOTIATIONS, WHICH REMAINED SLIM. FURTHER, EVEN A VOTE AGAINST PHNOM PENH WOULD

REALLY HAVE BEEN OF SECONDARY IMPORTANCE. THE REALLY
RELEVANT FACTORS WERE THE MILITARY AND POLITICAL SITUA-
TION ON THE GROUND IN CAMBODIA.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, MEETING VOTING RECORDS, POLITICAL LEADERS, VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 04 DEC 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: izenbei0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974PARIS29085
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X4
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740351-1136
From: PARIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741261/aaaacacu.tel
Line Count: 173
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: PARIS 27911
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: izenbei0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 01 MAY 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <01 MAY 2002 by elyme>; APPROVED <19 MAR 2003 by izenbei0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FRENCH VIEWS ON LE DUC THO'S VISIT AND THE UN VOTE ON CAMBODIA
TAGS: PFOR, CB, VS, FR, UN, (LE DUC THO)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005